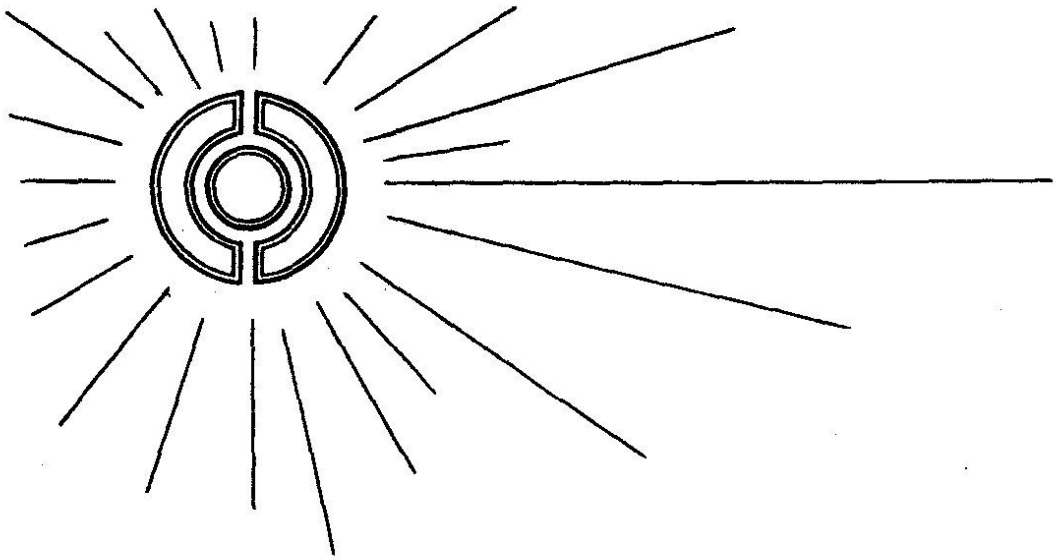
THE BI-MONTHLY

Newsletter of the Bisexual Center

Volume 7 Number 3 May-June 1983



COVER GRAPHICS BY ALEX SILBERSTEIN
(WITH SOME HELP FROM JIM BARNES)

FOURTH-OF-JULY CAMPING TRIP

This year will mark our fourth annual camping trip to the Russian River. Past trips have proved to be some of the most exciting, liberating, and joyous events of the years of our existence. Coming on the heels of the Lesbian/Gay Freedom Day Parade (June 26), the strength and unity gained from the march become multiplied during the three days we spend together.

We will be on the River Friday through Sunday, July 1, 2, and 3. This is a members-only event and the space is limited, so it is important to get your reservations in early. The cost is $10.00 per person per night. Call the Bi Center at 929-9299 for carpooling arrangements.

To reserve space, send $10.00 per person to the Center by June 28, specifying the days you want to reserve and whether you can provide transportation or need it yourself. See you there!

BOARD MEETINGS

The next two meetings of the Board of Directors of the Bisexual Center will be held on Monday, May 9, and Monday, June 13, at 7:30 PM, at the Bi Center. Meetings of the Board are open to Bi Center members only. We invite members who have a special interest in sharing their ideas and suggestions to attend.

THE BISEXUAL CENTER

1757 Hayes Street
San Francisco, CA 94117
(415)929-9299

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this issue:

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Newsletter Only.....	$ 6.00

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"ON THE THRESHOLD OF A DREAM"

To those of us sitting at the Board meeting on April 11th, the announcement by then-Secretary Neil Fullagar that the Bi Center had finally attained its legal non-profit status under California law, felt like a dream coming true. As Steven Brown remarked that memorable evening, "We are starting to feel very real."

Bisexuals are real people. We pay taxes, go to the grocery store, and most of us went to high school, "just like everybody else." Although our experiences of high school differ as vastly as our numbers, the memory of our high school prom night can be one of the longest lasting memories of our lives.

This year, the Bi Center Parade Committee has chosen to host a Prom Night at the Bi Center as its largest fundraiser for our participation in the Lesbian/Gay Freedom Day Parade and Celebration on June 26. An invitation to the Prom is enclosed in this issue of the Bi-Monthly.

In choosing our theme for Prom Night, "On the Threshold of a Dream," your hosts for the evening, Cliff and Charlene, welcome all of you to make this night a dream come true for yourselves. What did you miss at your senior prom (or what did you do right)? Did you get to wear the dress you really wanted to? Did you go or not go with the "right" person(s)? What was your fantasy before that fateful evening occurred? Could you dare to recreate that fantasy?

For Prom Night, we will be providing two punches and a few munchies to choose from, as well as a portrait studio and our infamous kissing booth, back by popular demand from the Valentine's Day Dance. For this event, there is an extra special discount for Bi Center members: couples and threesomes are also offered a discount price.

In keeping with protocol, a Prom King and Queen will be crowned at midnight. Please have your votes in by 11:30 P.M. Attendees of Prom Night are encouraged to bring records or tapes of the hit songs of your high school years.

For me, Prom Night was the only night during my high school years that I received permission from my parents to stay out until dawn. This year, give yourself permission to create a special fantasy: Prom Night at the Bi Center.

--Charlene Michael

REPORT ON CONFERENCE

The all-day conference on "Issues Uniting and Dividing the Gay/Lesbian and Bisexual Communities" held in San Francisco on Saturday, April 23rd, was a great, but not unqualified, success. Approximately 60 people attended, about two-thirds of whom were bi-identified.

As if to underscore the point, Phyllis Lyon, on the faculty of the Institute for the Advanced Study of Human Sexuality where the event was held, and co-author of Lesbian/Woman, gave an eloquent talk as part of the introductory panel on the need for the bi community to educate the lesbian/gay community about the realities of bisexual lifestyles. She also emphasized the need for on-going communication between the different communities

The latter became a kind of theme that pervaded the rest of the conference the need for more and better contact and understanding among gays, lesbians and bi's, in an effort to identify and appreciate our similarities, and to lessen the threat of our differences.

There was much enthusiasm among all participants for the conference to become an annual event. It was obvious, too, that there needs to be more bi involvement in the annual Gay/Lesbian Freedom Day Parade. The decisic was made to have a debriefing meeting Saturday, May 21st, at the Bi Center from 1-3 p.m. to discuss next year's conference plans and to formally begin organizing for recognized bi participation in next year's parade. If you'd like to be part of it, please come. We will report what happens in the next Bi-Monthly. Lee Olivier

SUPPORT GROUP FOR STRAIGHT WOMEN WITH BI PARTNERS

A woman who has no same sex interest but finds that the man in her life is Bi often feels isolated, with a special set of concerns. To meet this special need, a self-help group for straight women with Bi partners is now forming in the East Bay. Group members can share their experiences, gain information and support. If there's a trained group leader out there somewhere, who is a straight woman with a Bi man, and who would like to lead us, please contact us. Those interested please call Deena, 235-7179, or write Box 1112, El Cerrito, CA. 94530.

DRAWN from LIFE

by Jim Barnes

People who learn that I have attended several "life drawing" classes (in which students work from nude, or nearly-nude models) are often curious to know what goes on there, and often seem a little titillated at what they perceive as a sort of disguised sexual encounter. There is always an element of sexuality present--just as there is at even the most high-minded of the nudist health resorts--but often there is an even deeper and more powerful element of the erotic, in the ancient sense of that binding quality of interest, empathy, and tenderness among human beings. The following story is an attempt to explore in words the meaning of this experience, as it took place in a store-front classroom at a struggling artists' collective, one night in San Francisco.

Delayed by the rainy streets, I entered the classroom late again, and all of the good spots were taken, in the crowded, cluttered little room. So were the easels--I had to make do with one that had to be re-assembled every half-hour or so, by pushing the nails back into their holes.

Most of the"regulars" were there, finishing the process of setting up their drawing boards, selecting their water-colors or sharpening their pencils. For a change, there were a fair number of women in the class, including some new faces.

Our leader, David--a tall, lanky young man with straight brown hair falling to his shoulders and a drooping moustache--was introducing the model for this session: "This is Carol. She's an artist. She's never modelled before, so you'll have to tell her what you want her to do. We'll start with the usual one-minute warm-up poses, first.

Still dressed, Carol stepped up on the model's stand. After a moment's hesitation, she took a standing pose, with one arm outstretched.

"Good...O.K., change...turn a little more to the right...O.K., hold it.... change...."

Her loose cotten slacks and soft cotton pullover concealed most of her figure. Her wavy, light-chestnut-brown hair fell below her shoulder blades, and concealed most of her shoulders and neck. My one-minute "gesture" drawings were a collection of mostly vague, formless shapes.

"O.K., start taking your boots off. Good!-- Hold that.....

Carol looked down at her unlaced boot with a shy smile. She seemed to be about 21 or 22, at most. She kept her light-blue eyes from focusing on any one of the intent faces arranged in a semi-circle beyond the spotlights, avoiding that uncomfortable personal eye contact in the way that models customarily do.

The faint sounds of pencil, or charcoal, or pastel crayon brushing across paper were punctuated by equally faint sighs, coughs, the scrape of chairs or feet on the wooden floor, and an occasional muttered 'Damn!" s some elusive contour disappeared from the paper under a mess of corrected and re-corrected lines.

"Five-minute poses next. O.K., Carol, do you want to take your clothes off now?--You're an artist, can you pose naked?"

I winced inwardly at David's use of the word "naked," instead of the traditional "nude," with it's more "elevated" (and therefore respectable")connotations. But what's the difference, really.

It seemed strange that David and Carol hadn't worked out the limits of Carol's responsibility in acting as our model for the evening, but perhaps this was one of those times when our scheduled model had disappeared--sick, busted for possession, absent-minded, or just bored with the whole idea of modelling--and Carol had volunteered at the last minute, as often happened. Her obvious reluctance to disrobe made me feel both embarrassed and protective, and faintly annoyed as well.

GRAPHICS BY ALEX SILBERSTEIN

"All right," she said, laughing a little. She removed her loose white cotton shirt with a smooth, practiced gesture, and unclipped and removed her bra, facing away from the class, then turned back to show only a profile view. Her breasts were full and soft, her fair skin sprinked with small freckles.

Her first pose, in this half-turned position which gave most of the class only a view of her smoothly curved back, brought her face to face with Jane, whose calm, warm smile, floating above the swelling globe of a nine-months rounded womb may have offered her some comfort and re-assurance. Propping her drawing board on her belly, Jane began to sketch Carol's face and torso.

"O.K., that's time. Now change..."

"How's this," she asked, facing the wall.

"No, turn around now," David said, calmly.

Carol turned to face the center of the semi-circle of artists, laughing again in embarrassment. A rose-colored blush filled her face, and flooded delicately over her throat and breasts. Sympathetic laughter from the students joined her own.

"O.K., turn a little more to the left...raise your arm--no, the left arm... hold it!"

As the poses grew longer--ten minutes, then fifteen--the mood of the class grew more calm, more centered, more intense. Of the fifteen or so people in the class, half had been meeting in this ramshackle old building for more than a year, pursuing the elusive image of the human form and its beauty in shape after shape--male, female, young, old, graceful, graceless. Our work had become both routine, and at the same time sacramental. We had discovered the yoga of observation.

As I worked at rendering Carol's face, in my favorite medium, conté crayon, our eyes sometimes met. As before, she quickly broke the contact, glancing away or closing her eyes. She kept a faint, vague smile, that sometimes broadened slightly in response to my own, or someone else's, answering smile.

"O.K., let's take a break. What's this? Wine? For me? Hey, thanks!" David, who was leaving next week for a month's trip, poured out the wine his friend had brought as a farewell gesture, for the class. We took a longer break than usual, drinking the wine and sharing observations on each other's work: "Nice lines! And I think you got that shadow that her hair made on her neck really well." Of the dozens of drawings, some representing Carol as a muscular Amazon, some portraying her as a fragile waif, a few actually looked like her. She wandered through the room, looking quietly delighted with the variety of portraits.

(continued on page 6)

Letters

March 23, 1983

Dear Bi-Monthly;

I have been getting your newsletter since July/August 1982. I have really enjoyed it and will be becoming a member, even though I live in Seattle.

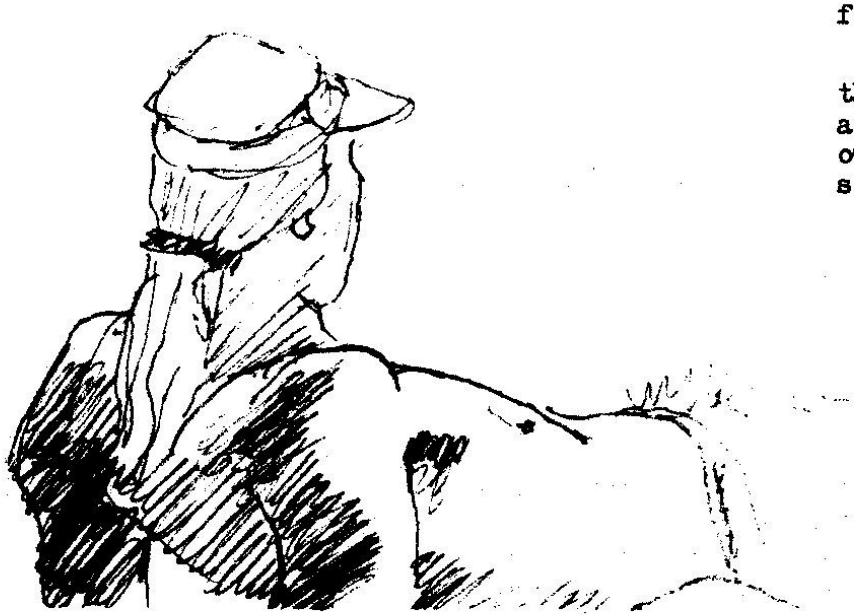
I am in the process of writing a book geared to and for the Bisexual Woman. It will be a handbook, resource center, and/or support system, to reach women who don't know where to start, what to do, or who to talk to.

I am interviewing bi-women, lesbians relating to men, bi-women of color, etc., regarding various issues such as Lesbian community reaction, coming out bisexually, labelling, communication, relationships.

If there are any bi-women interested in getting a questionnaire, please have them write to me. I'll be reimbursing them for postage, when they return the questionnaire.

Keep up the great support work that you're doing!!!

Sincerely,
Jet Tenley
4701-15th Ave. NE
Seattle, WA 98105



GRAPHIC BY ALEX SILBERSTEIN

(DRAWN FROM LIFE, continued)

With some reluctance, we put down our glasses and went back to work.

"O.K., everybody, two fifteens, and then we quit."

Carol, by now completely, and comfortably, nude, rested one knee on a stool as she finished her wine. She smiled more broadly now, and had to be reminded not to turn her head when responding to some comment or joke from the class. Her eyes were now open and unguarded, and it was my turn to look away, in mild discomfort, when our eyes met as I struggled to capture her elusive smile on paper.

I had just succeeded in converting a tentative sketch of that gentle smile into a grotesque leer, when the class ended. We collected our drawing materials, coats, hats, and umbrellas, and began to straggle reluctantly toward the door, and out into the gentle San Francisco drizzle.

Carol was pulling on her boots, and talking to a pair of dawdlers.

"The is the first time I've ever modelled, and, you know, I draw a lot, and I'm used to looking at a model--but this is really different. I think everybody should do it. You really don't know what it's like to be on the other end of the pencil... it's just a whole trip. I mean, when I draw, I sort of fall in love with the model; you're relating so intensely, you know, and, well...I just looked at each of you working, and I felt so fond of you all...." She looked down at her boots, which she had finished lacing up.

The shadow of Eros paused a moment in the doorway, turning back to bless us with a knowing, gently ironic smile which had outlasted the millenia, and then faded soundlessly into the rainy night.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Advertising space in the Bi-Monthly is open to BiCenter members at $1.00/42-letter line. Business cards are $5.00/card. Sorry no "personal" ads.

Maggie

MARGUERITE RUBENSTEIN, Ph.D., A.C.S.
Sexologist
Licensed Marriage and Family Counselor
#MM 8794

928-1133 584-0172

Alan M. Rockway, Ph.D.
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SO. CALIF. BI CENTER

For members visiting the southland, the Bi-Social Center, 7136 Matilija Ave, Van Nuys 91405 is a place to meet and socialize; their newsletter describing upcoming events is available for S.A.S.E. to above address.

PARADE

On Sunday, June 26, San Francisco will be hosting its annual Lesbian/Gay Freedom Day Parade and Celebration. As most of you know, each year the Bi Center takes part in this event, and a large part of the Bi Center's new membership and our contact with the lesbian and gay communities is established on this Freedom Day. It is a Day to both celebrate our homosexuality (of whatever degree) and to reach out to people at the Parade who have perhaps never found "their place" and feel validated to find bi's out there.

Our participation this year will be as exciting and important as ever. The Parade Committee has begun this year to deal openly with the issue of bisexuality, and the first conference of its kind took place in April to bring bi's, gays, and lesbians together to share with and confront each other on issues that unite and divide us.

The first event of Parade Week at the Bi Center will take place on Saturday, June 18, with our now-traditional Bi/Lesbian/Gay Pre-Parade Social. Bring your gay and lesbian-identified friends for an evening of socializing and celebrating. This event begins at 8:00 PM, and we'll ask for a $1.00 donation to help support the Bi Center.

On the morning of the Parade, people who want to march with us, and people who want to stay at the booth all day, will meet here at the Center at 9:00 PM to carpool and bus together to those respective sites.

This year, the Center is focusing on putting out a strong, colorful, united image as we walk up Market Street. To this end, marchers are encouraged to wear their Bi Center T-shirts. Bi Center balloons will be on hand for marchers to carry, as well as flyers to hand out to the crowd.

A few hints for our marchers: bring a hat, parasol, or sunglasses to protect yourself from sunburn and dehydration. Water is encouraged as an alternative to beer during the march, as an additional preventative measure against dehydration. Don't bring a lot of money or other valuables. Consider bringing suntan cream and a few dimes for phone calls.

After the Day's main events are over, there will be a wind-down party here at the Bi Center, which will start around 6:00 PM and go until around 9:00 PM. We'll provide munchies and rejuvenating drinks. We encourage everyone to bring their favorite sunburn remedy to share, as needed.

MANY PARTS ARE EDIBLE

Ever tried a Wednesday night rap group? Been getting the newsletter for months but havn't gotten up the time or nerve to come find out what a rap group is like? This we're too astute, too boring, too_____(fill in your own appropriate excuse here)?

The Wednesday night raps are for women and men. We start at 7:30 P.M. and go until about 10 o'clock. There is carpooling after the discussion. We ask for a donation of three to five dollars, but no one has ever been turned away from a rap group if they can't donate money.

A brief sample of possible topics on any given evening might go something like this: Relationships, Sex, Breaking Up, Communicating, Choice, Coming Out, Finishing Old Business, Fantasies, Self-Image, Self-Identification, Realities, and the like.

The Bi Center's rap groups have been going on for several years, and, in sticking with what works, the facilitators try to keep the group's focus on a few simple guidelines.

Some of the guidelines are to ask people to talk in terms of "I" instead of "you," to make statements instead of asking questions, to share recent, personal experiences as contrasted with sweeping generalities for all times, and to focus on ourselves and the present. We ask participants in groups to respect the confidentiality of the group, and try not to worry that everyone in the group won't arrive at an identical conclusion about an issue, to be non-judgemental toward whatever self-chosen identity others may have, and to be selfish in bringing up the issues we are most concerned with that evening.

PARENTS GROUP

Charlene Michael, co-facilitator of Wednesday evening rap groups at the Bi Center, is putting together a dynamic, supportive rap group for parents who identify as bisexual. This group will be a closed group which will meet every Sunday evening from 6:00 to 8:00 PM, beginning July 17, 1983. A comfortable, safe space has been provided for the group to meet in, in San Francisco.

Besides providing support and sharing with one another, the focus of the group will also be to establish ourselves as an active group within the bisexual community. The first several weeks of the meetings will be sued to work on our current issues of parenting, particularly concentrating on our one-to-one relationships with our children as those relationships now exist, and to establish a rapport and trust with each other within the group. The next few weeks will entail putting together enough material, written and drawn by ourselves, to provide for a special issue of the Bi-Monthly on our experiences of being bi-identified parents.

Drawing on the energy of our sharing and work together, the parents group will eventually be able to organize and form a co-operative childcare network for parents within our community who attend Bi Center events.

Parents of both sexes, all ages, and all living arrangements are welcomed and encouraged to sign up for this exciting group. Space is limited to twelve people; a ten-week commitment is necessary to join the group. The fee for participation will be $30.00, to support the work of the Bi Center.

BI SUPPORT GROUP IN BERKELEY

For women, men, couples. Meets Sundays, 7:30 PM, at the Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Ave. For more information, call the Pacific Center at 841-5224, or Don Honor at 482-2819.

THE LADY/DYKE IN ME

Hi! I'm Jackie
You all know me
I'm the friendly one at the Bi Center
As tough as I can be

I used to tolerate
The woman's place to be
Yet I'm still a virgin
With a lot of woman in me

I've been to the rap groups
And the parties galore
Meeting both men and women
Of whom I both adore

I've learned I'm not straight
Nor gay as I could be
I am bisexual
That's the lady/dyke in me

--by Jackie

TRANSITIONS

Special thanks are due to Neil Fullagar, who recently resigned as Secretary of the Board of Directors, for working so long at that demanding job, and to Jay Paul, who nobly volunteered to take Neil's place.

This will be Jim Barnes' last issue as editor of the Bi-Monthly. A warm welcome goes to Nate Brown, who will be your new editor next issue: he'll be needing a lot of help, so now is the time to donate an hour or two some Sunday to the Newsletter Committee (see the newsletter schedule on page 10).

The Bi Center is an all-volunteer organization, and we need the donated labor (as well as the financial support) of our members to continue providing the services we have made available now for almost seven years. Please keep this in mind when you think you might like to see more social events, lectures, presentations, or outings happening at the Bi Center.

Community Bulletin Board

Dear Friends,

David and I have lived above the Bi Center ever since we bought the building five years ago. Now, for many reasons, we need to live elsewhere, leaving our flat available for rent as of August 1.

We would like people who are supportive of the Center to live upstairs. Those of you who have seen the flat know it has a large, attractive, modern kitchen with all the conveniences. It has a split bath, two bedrooms plus an extra room, a dining room with a fireplace, and a living room. There is a small unfenced deck off the dining room.

The rent will be $750/month. We will need the first and last months rent, a $200 security deposit, and a year's lease. If you're interested, call 567-4359, or 567-3871 and leave a message.

Lee Olivier
David Lourea

A.A. GROUP

Sponsored by a local group of Alcoholics Anonymous, the "Bi Bye Booze" Group meets each Monday night at the Bi Center, from 7:00 to 8:00. New members are welcome.

WOMEN'S RAP GROUP

At 7:30 PM, on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month, the Bisexual Center offers a drop-in rap group for women to share their thoughts and feelings around issues of bisexuality. Not a self-help therapy/support group or an intellectualization session, but an opportunity to meet with women and share relevant issues in our lives. All women welcome. A $3.00-$5.00 donation will be requested.

NEWSLETTER

Your articles, poems, stories (fact and fiction), letters, and drawings, are needed for the Bi-Monthly. All contributions must be in by the start of the next layout lession to be considered for the next issue.

Schedule:

LAYOUT: Sunday, June 12, from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm
PASTE-UP: Sunday, June 19, from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm

Your help at these sessions is invited in typing, setting up titles, cutting and pasting, and other jobs. No previous experience is needed, and you don't have to stay for the entire session.

WOMEN'S ALL-TOGETHER GET TOGETHER POT-LUCK

The women's rap group, together with the women's Fat Is Beautiful, This Is Beautiful rap group, is sponsoring an open house pot luck for women only. We also hope to encourage women from the community who aren't familiar with the Bi Center to join us and learn more about the Bi Center, so bring your friends! And bring your favorite food and/or drink.

Date: Saturday, May 7
Time: 7:30 P.M.
Place: The Bi Center
Donation: $1.00--members
$2.00--non-members

FAT IS BEAUTIFUL THIN IS BEAUTIFUL

This ongoing rap group is for all women of every size. We will discuss issues relating to feeling good about' how you look. We will neither encourage or discourage dieting. We meet the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of every month, here at the Bi Center, 1 P.M.-3 P.M.' Donation: $3-$5. Please be on time.

BI-MONTHLY CALENDAR 1983

May

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8	9 BOARD MTNG (p. 2) --- AA GROUP (MONDAYS) p. 10	10	11	12	13	14 WOMEN'S FAT/THIN GROUP p. 10
15	16 ♀ RAP p. 10	17	18	19	20	21 CONF. FOLLOW-UP p. 3 --- "PROM NITE" PARTY (p. 3)
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June

		TUESDAY NIGHT RAP GP (7:30-10 BI CTR)	1 WEDNESDAY NIGHT RAP p. 8	2	3	4
5	6 ♀ RAP p. 10 --- AA GP. p. 10	7	8	9	10	11 ♀ FAT/THIN p. 10
12 NEWSLETTER LAYOUT p. 10	13 BOARD MEETING p. 2	14	15	16	17	18 PRE-PARADE SOCIAL p. 8
19 NEWSLETTER PASTEUP p. 10	20 ♀ RAP p. 10	21	22	23	24	25 ♀ FAT/THIN p. 10
26 LGFD PARADE! p. 8	27	28	29	30 (PARENTS' GROUP STARTS JULY 17 p. 9)	4TH OF JULY RIVER CAMPING TRIP JULY 1, 2, 3	

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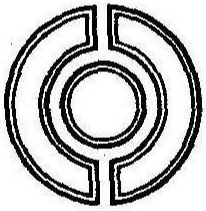

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